



4<sup>TH</sup> BATTALION (ATTACK) 4<sup>TH</sup> AVIATION REGIMENT FORT HOOD, TEXAS



## *Message from the Battalion Commander*

Gambler Guns,

The last months were extremely busy for everyone in the battalion. Gunnery, Task Force Lanes, 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade Combat Teams (BCT) Mission Rehearsal Exercises (MRE), National Training Center Deployment, and of course Operation Iraq Freedom deployment load-out. I cannot express in words alone how proud I am of everyone's collective excellence. This is a great battalion.

The purpose of this newsletter is two fold...first, an opportunity for each commander to discuss the units accomplishments, highlight individual excellence, and basically blow your horn, and secondly, a forum to keep spouses, family, and friends informed as we deploy and conduct our mission in Iraq in support of the Global War on Terrorism. I would like to take this opportunity now to thank Cynthia Mehalitc for putting this newsletter together and ensuring its dissemination in the future months.

Approximately 35% of the battalion are veterans and this is our second or third time deploying into combat. Personally, I returned just 18 short months ago, but it does not make it any easier to say good bye to my friends and family. For the remainder of the battalion this is a dramatic and life changing event. I and the Commanders of this unit will do everything in our power to alleviate the stress and anxiety for Soldiers and families alike. My responsibility to safe guard our countries most valuable resource...The American Soldier...is not taken lightly. I give you my word we will protect ourselves foremost, conduct our mission professionally, and take no unnecessary risks. I will be up front with you at all times...this is not an easy mission, but we are ready. Our Nation is counting on us now and I am confident of our capabilities.

On 3 November 2005 I will talk to the Soldiers and families of this battalion concerning our deployment. I realize our lives are extremely busy, but I ask each of you to consider attending this event...Soldiers (mandatory), spouses, fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters are invited. It is critical to everyone's success that we have a forum to answer any question you may wish to ask. What I can tell you is we will be gone for at least 12 months and we will be fighting and living near Baghdad. It is a critical and decisive time for our Country and most likely historical. It will be a long year, but one I promise you we will all look back on with great satisfaction and pride.

I am extremely proud of all of you for the sacrifices you make to our country in order to safe guard our freedoms. Men and women with resolve, passion, integrity, and courage fill our battalion and today's Army. I am honored to stand a long side them as we protect and serve our Nation.

LTC John E. Novalis II  
"Gambler 6"

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## *Message from Mary Novalis* *Battalion FRG Leader*

Gambler Guns (Soldiers, spouses, friends, and family),

The time is quickly counting down to the day when we will say good bye to our Soldiers. It seems like just yesterday John was returning from Operation Iraqi Freedom I. I am sure that many of you feel the same. The last months have been very busy for us and the Gambler Guns, but I know in my heart they are a better unit after all the training they have accomplished.

The last months have also seen the Family Readiness Group (FRG) continue to support our Soldiers and their families. If you have not participated in the FRG in the past then I ask you to consider joining us. We have only one goal, irregardless of rank, and that is supporting each other and developing self reliant families. We do not cut grass, or fix cars, or the toilet, but we can help you find someone who does. We are also an organization that assists the rear detachment in passing information to everyone. It is my experience, being an Army wife for 16 years that it is nice to have someone to rely on or a shoulder to cry on during the deployment.

I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible on 3 November 2005 at the deployment brief given by my husband.

I am proud of John and the Gambler Guns and I wish them God speed and good luck. They are the defenders of our countries freedoms. They are simply the best. We will do our part to keep the home front safe for their return.

Mary J. Novalis  
"Household 6"

### Battalion FRG

HHC FRG Leader- Cynthia Mahalitic/Co Chair -Katie Moshier

A Company FRG Leader- Kenna Glendening

B Company FRG Leader- Karin Greco

C Company FRG Leader- Andrea Randel/Co Chair- Maria Williams

D Company FRG Leader- Angie Baynes /Co Chair- Angela Reed

E Company FRG Leader- Rosie Hinojosa/Co Chair- Lisa Hampton

Battalion FRG Treasurer- Briana Thompson

Battalion FRG Secretary- Sandy Fales

Battalion FRG Advisors- Leslie Kliethermes, Briana Thompson and Karen Samuels

Rear-D CPT Harris

Go Team Leader- Trish Haver

Newsletter- Cynthia Mahalitic

Welcome- Angie Baynes

Chaplain Quinn

## *Message from HHC Commander*



**RAIDERS**

Raiders-

It surely has been a fast-paced summer as we have postured ourselves for the upcoming deployment. It is needless to mention all the training and events that we have accomplished over the past few months-there have been so many. However, I would like to emphasize that the training we have conducted has definitely increased our overall readiness, both individually, and collectively. As I reflect back on the past year and a half from the beginning, it is very gratifying to see just how far we have come. Although it may seem difficult at times to see the light at the end of the tunnel for this War on Terror, please be reassured by knowing that we have done everything we could have to be successful in our future endeavors abroad. And success to me equals mission accomplishment with minimal risk to our Soldiers, and a safe return. I can remark with ease that this unit is more prepared than any I have ever served with in the past. I am confident that the saying, "An ounce of sweat, is worth a gallon of blood" will now be a reality for us.

I would be sorely remiss to forget to mention and thank our FRG that has progressively strengthened as a unit and provided us with an invaluable source of information flow, family assistance, and Soldier support. Now, more than ever, we are relying on the FRG to provide assistance to ensure that Soldiers can concentrate on those missions that lie ahead without the worry of families being taken care of behind. I know you are ready to assume that critical role as we deploy overseas. I encourage those who have not yet been able to introduce yourselves to the others in the FRG, to come out and establish a relationship that will be very beneficial to us all throughout the upcoming year.

I would like to personally thank each and every one of you and your families for your selfless service to this great country, the Army, and to each other. 9/11 will always be a powerful reminder to me of why we do what we do. I truly believe that you are all doing something extremely noble; something for a greater cause, and I am truly humbled each day to be serving along side such fine people and families. Be proud of what you have done so far, and be even prouder of what you are about to do. I am extremely proud of all of you.

You have my word that I will do my best to ensure that our families stay informed and our Soldiers stay safe during this upcoming year of deployment. I understand the great magnitude of what we are about to embark on and I will ensure that we never lose our focus throughout. I can assure you that there will be some good days as well as some bad days, but if we work through those tough times together, as one team, we will overcome any challenge that comes our way.

Please seize the days ahead and take some much-deserved family and personal time to enjoy yourselves during the month of November. Don't forget to tie a yellow ribbon around the old oak tree and remember that we are one step closer to coming back home. Happy Thanksgiving- we have MUCH to give thanks for! Thanks for your continual dedication, service, and support.

Raiders Lead From the Front!

CPT James Yastrzemycki

"Raider 06"

**RAIDERS**



## Message from A Company Commander



A busy last few months for the Peacemakers in preparation for the upcoming deployment. Kenna and I would like to personally thank you all for the sacrifices you have made, your patience, and the devotion you have shown during this period. As many of you already know the lead up to deployment is some of the busiest times you will experience in the military, but know that it was for a purpose and has better prepared your loved ones for Iraq.

We have had some recent additions to the Peacemaker family in the last few weeks. W01 Brian Cabreira and his wife Kris as well as W01 Joe Rea joined our ranks in September. A hearty welcome to you all. Do not hesitate to contact Kenna or myself if you need anything that will help smooth your transition to Fort Hood. Congratulations to the Liebert's on the birth of their twin boys Peyton and Bradley and the Powers' on the birth of their son Cody. We also have quite a few "baby" Peacemakers on the way. The Cabreira family, Lewanski family, and Meno family are all expecting a new arrival, and the Richardson family is expecting twin boys in the spring. Congratulations to all!

Many achievements for the company over the last few months. The company led the way during the Battalion Aerial Gunnery with the most Distinguished crews, highest company average score, highest HGST average, highest vehicle identification average, and had the overall Battalion Top Gun winners (1LT Greg Chappel and CW2 John Schneider). These outstanding achievements could not have been accomplished without the hard work of all the crewchiefs putting good aircraft in the air and all the pilots ensuring they were prepared to successfully execute. SPC Edwards did a great job representing the company by winning the Soldier of the month board in August. CPL Meno was promoted to SGT. SSG Morales was promoted to SFC. PFC Campbell, PFC Caperton, and PFC Lewanski were all promoted to CPL. Also, CW2 Hawkinson and CW2 Mitchell were selected for promotion to CW3 and should be eligible to pin on in 2006. SFC Raines successfully completed ANCOC and returned to us after a 2 month absence; great to have him back. A phenomenal performance by all!

Kenna and I would like to thank all the Peacemakers and their families for the strong support you've given the FRG. A special thanks to all the ladies that made it to the FRG meetings and the families that participated in the Company Barbeque at the O'Gorman's home. Please don't forget about the 3 November deployment briefing at the Phantom Warrior Center or the dinner party at our home on 8 November.

Now that the training is complete and the majority of our equipment is shipped we should be able to catch our breath. Take advantage of the time you will have with your loved ones before we deploy. Again, Kenna and I thank you for the sacrifices you make to our country in order to safe guard our freedoms. We are still very much at war and it takes a special breed of people that are willing to make the sacrifices that we all endure. You are all true American patriots and should hold yourself in the highest regards for what you do.

CPT Josh Glendenning  
"PEACEMAKER 06"



## Message from B Company Commander



It's been an incredibly busy four months for the Bushmasters, and Karin and I want to thank the FRG for everything you've done to take care of us while we've been in the field, and for the great welcome home you gave us as we returned from NTC. Here's an update on everything that have been going on in the company lately. 1SG Fales, SPC Johnson, and SGT Damuth were all recognized by the Raider Brigade as Heroes of the Rotation for their superior performance during our time at the NTC. We've recently welcomed three new wives as Lisa Celestino, Kari McFalls, and Lisa Day joined our company. CPL Jones returned to us after a month at Fort Rucker completing the Aircrew Life Support Equipment Course just in time to field our aviators with the Army's new Air Warrior flight gear. As always, SFC Everette and SFC Rivera did a fantastic job taking care of our maintainers and aviators during our month at the NTC. SPC Spencer and SPC Celestino had the chance to participate in one of the Army's most advanced convoy live-fire ranges, earning high marks from all of the evaluators at NTC. SGT Ourada, SPC McKittrick, SPC Hernandez, SPC Ferry, SPC White, SPC DeGuzman, and all of our great maintainers were credited by the NTC evaluator team with one of the finest maintenance performances that they had seen in recent history, allowing the Bushmasters to fly more hours and destroy more enemy than any unit that the evaluators had seen. SGT Damuth and CW2 Kellner have been the hardest working Bushmasters over the past month ensuring that all of our equipment makes it to Kuwait in one piece. SGT Brooks and SGT Damuth were both asked to step up as our first and second platoon sergeants and continue to do a superb job in the absence of SFC Rivera and SFC Everette. CW3 Henderscheid finally got confirmation that he will be one of a select few aviators from across the Army chosen to attend the Naval Test Pilot School and continue on as an Experimental Test Pilot after returning from Iraq. CW2 Hayek and his wife Jessica are expecting a new addition to the family after the New Year. I haven't seen CW3 Haver, CW3 Polidore, CW2 Mathis, CW2 Swim, and WO1 Plucinski in a month, so I can't update you on them. CPT Nilsen went on a cruise with his family, and really hasn't done anything productive for the company since. 2LT Hayes continues to learn his way around his new home here with us in B Company.

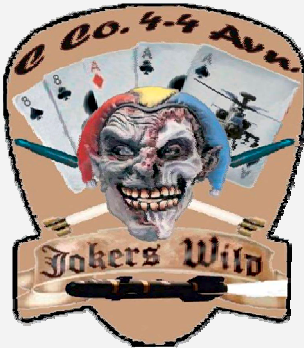
As far as promotions go, the months of September and October were especially good to the Bushmasters. SGT Strickland was selected for promotion to Staff Sergeant, and both PFC Norman and PFC Celestino received promotion orders to Specialist while at the National Training Center. CW3 Rondeau was selected for promotion to CW4. CW2 Rose, CW2 Day, CW2 Thoresen, and CW2 Sanders were all selected for promotion to CW3.

After returning from NTC, we sent CPT Hommerding to Headquarters Company to give them some much-needed assistance. Also, we said goodbye to SGT Kinyanjui and SPC Gioiosa as they start new lives in the civilian world.

Thanks again for all of your support over these tough few months. Please join us for the November 3<sup>rd</sup> Pre-deployment Briefing and have a great time with your loved ones during our leave in November. BUSHHHHHH!

-- CPT Scott Greco

## Message from C Company Commander



This is the first time I've addressed the Gambler Guns and their families as Joker 06. I'm honored to have been selected to lead this formation and aspire to do as good of a job as my predecessor, CPT Eric Kober. Charlie Company has been very busy over the last few months preparing for our deployment to Iraq. Charlie Company has also seen many changes. We've retired some, transferred others and promoted many. All changes, all though some sad, have helped us to grow and have made us into the organization we are today.

Since early May, Charlie Company has been habitually supporting 4BCT, so every time they conducted training Charlie Company did as well. We conducted numerous training exercises from the hangar, albeit some on weekends and finally their capstone exercise during the latter half of September. All training exercises and other Army required events have kept us very busy. All our hard work has paid off and Charlie Company is prepared for deployment. I appreciate all the sacrifices families have made during the past few months and without your support we would not be where we are today.

Charlie Company has seen many changes. Both platoon leader positions changed within the last four months. CPT Tim Moshier and CPT Holly Harris moved onto greener pastures. Tim works in the battalion operations office and Holly is the rear detachment commander. Two platoon leaders who did a great and will be missed. We also lost an excellent 1SG, 1SG Minor, who recently retired. Another loss, that leaves very large shoes to fill, is CW3 Mike Hartwick. Mike transferred to Delta Company and will continue to do great things for the battalion by supporting the entire battalion with maintenance activities and not just Charlie Company. CW2 Aguirre, one of the best safety officers in the battalion, got out of the Army and is currently working at Corpus Christi Army Depot. CW2(P) Travis Jackson has moved to the 4th Brigade Combat Team as one of the new aviation advisors. We continue to work with him and as a supported aviator will see more of him in the future. Unfortunately we also lost SSG Luis Laboy. Luis just got back from advanced Army schooling and moved to Delta Company as a technical inspector.

Where Charlie Company lost, it soon gained. We gained two platoon leaders, 1LT Mitchell and 1LT Shippee. 1LT(P) Kim Mitchell came to us from headquarters company where he was the support platoon leader, arguably one of the toughest jobs a lieutenant can hold. Soon after, we gained 1LT Thomas Shippee. Tom just graduated flight school and as a new addition, rounds out the company leadership team. Additionally, we gained a new 1SG, 1SG Earl Thomas who came to us from Fort Eustis. We are very lucky to have 1SG's expertise. 1SG had a hand in writing a lot of the technical manuals that Jokers and soldiers across the Army use every day. We also received a new pilot, CW2 Matt Howard. Matt was in Korea for a year and brings with him a lot of medical expertise since he is a licensed nurse. We also gained two crew chiefs, SPC Parsek and PFC Harris who came to us from Delta Company. Based on their outstanding performance in Delta Company they were transferred to Charlie Company, where they continue their high level of performance.

Charlie Company has one of the highest promotion rates in the battalion. 1LT(P) Kim Mitchell was picked up for promotion to Captain. CW2(P) Steve Boehm, CW2(P) Murphy, CW2(P) Thomas Nowlin and CW2(P) John Oravetz all were picked up for promotion to Chief Warrant Officer Three. The crew chiefs have also seen a large number of promotions as well. CPL Khale, CPL Yealge and CPL Morgan all received a lateral promotion to corporal for their outstanding performance at or above their next level. SPC Parsek and SPC Ping also received a promotion to specialist.

Last but not least Charlie Company has been blessed with a few new Jokers. Matt and Summer Stauffer had a baby girl, Camiryn in January. John and Stephanie Oravetz had a baby girl, Valeri in December. Steve and Tracie Schwab had a baby girl, Raegan in July. Shawn Malara had a baby girl, Payton in September. Phillip and Savannah Henderson are expecting in mid-November.

The FRG team has also changed ownership. Katie Moshier, who did a great job for Charlie Company, is now working as leader for the battalion FRG. Andrea Randel agreed to be Charlie Company's new FRG Leader and Maria Williams as the assistant leader. Both have worked very hard since taking over in late June and will continue to do so as Charlie Company heads overseas. Thanks again for all your support.

I'm looking forward to sending more updates as the success of Charlie Company continue to build. The road before us has many challenges and with the support of all the Charlie Company families I know we can accomplish any task. Thanks again for all your help.

CPT Peter G Stegmaier  
CPT, AV  
Commanding



## Message from D Company Commander

### Darkhorse Family

Darkhorse soldiers and family members have been running at a very fast pace and continue to do excellent work. It started in July with Task Force Lanes and continued on into aerial gunnery, National Training Center, and now preparation for Operation Iraqi Freedom 05-07. We have excelled in all tasks given to us and I expect the same throughout our pre-deployment preparations.



I would like to highlight some of our accomplishments so that you know why your spouse is spending late nights at work. During Task Force Lanes, our operational readiness rate was greater than 90%. During Aerial Gunnery, Armament platoon was instrumental in the battalion's ability to qualify 29 aircrews. The National Training Center was also successful for us. Although we were in harsh desert conditions, no missions were missed due to maintenance.

As with all accomplishments, there were some great soldiers who went above and beyond. Although the following is not all inclusive, I would like to recognize a few soldiers: SSG Fioschetti and Crawford have been selected to Warrant Officer Candidate School. Based upon their performance, it is well deserved. Congratulations! SSG Adams was recognized at NTC as the "Hero of RSOI" because of his efforts during port operations. As the D company UMO, he took a personal interest in rail operations resulting in the downloading of over 949 pieces of equipment from not only 4-4 AVN but all of Task Force 1BCT. SPC Roidt was recognized as one of the "Hero's of the Battle" at NTC for destroying an enemy vehicle more than 400 meters away. These are just some of the great accomplishments. I am extremely lucky to have disciplined soldiers that easily adapt to changing environments.

The command and I have established very little mandatory training in the month of November. The purpose of this is to maximize personal and family time in preparation for deployment. The time is allocated to get soldiers personal affairs in order and to spend time with family prior to deployment. The only requirement is a mandatory November 3<sup>rd</sup> Deployment briefing.

Again, I am extremely lucky to lead the Darkhorse soldiers. I look forward to serving with you. The upcoming deployment will be challenging for both the soldier and their family members. We will be successful in fighting the war on terror. DARKHORSE!

"DARKHORSE 06"  
Thad D. Weist  
CPT, AV



## Message from E Company Commander



Welcome from the halls of the Enforcers. We have been running strong since 19 May when the company stood up. The OPTEMPO of the Company will finally slow down, just in time for the Nov Block Leave. I would like to welcome 1SG Libby and his family to the Enforcer Team. 1SG Libby comes to us from Fort Jackson South Carolina with his wife Toni and three daughters. He comes to us with OIF-1 experience which is great to have as a 1SG leading soldiers into OIF-3. We also want to welcome the following Enforcers:

SFC Santana 63X  
SSG Draper 63B  
SPC Davis 92F

Over the past few months the Enforcers family has become a little larger. I would like to congratulate PFC Jenkins and the birth of her son. On 14 September Kameron came into the World weighing 6lb and 5oz. I also would like to congratulate PFC Sanchez, he is the proud father of a baby boy, Johnny Jr. was born on 9 September weighing in at 9lb and 5oz.

I would like to thank Rosie Hinojosa for stepping up and filling the void as the Enforcer FRG Leader and Lisa Hampton as the FRG assistant. I would also like to thank Rosie Hinojosa, Lisa Hampton, Patricia Reyes and Brenda Padron for their support during the FRG fundraiser that raised \$400.82 at the Rail Operation Center as we pushed all of our equipment to Iraq. The FRG will be detrimental to holding the families together during our year deployment and I would like to thank all family members for volunteering their services.

CPT Angel Figueroa  
"ENFORCER 6"

## *Gambler Guns Events*

# TFLX 1-13 July 05



Ricardo-guard-duty



Class Training



50-cal.-training 2



soldiers-training



Caskey-medic-tent 4

# Gunnery 29 July 05

## Gunnery 29 July 05



Apache Rockets



Harmonizing Fire



Apache Approaching



## *Gambler Guns Events*

# **Railhead 24 Aug 05**



# **NTC 1-30 Sept 05**



# **NTC Homecoming**





## *Gambler Guns Events*

# Single Soldiers Dinner 24 Oct 05



# Family Memories Fall Event 28 Oct 05



4TH BATTALION, 4TH AVIATION REGIMENT WAS CONSTITUTED ON 17 MARCH 1980 IN THE REGULAR ARMY AS COMPANY C, 4TH AVIATION BATTALION, AN ELEMENT OF THE 4TH INFANTRY DIVISION. THE UNIT WAS ACTIVATED ON 16 MARCH 1982 AT FORT CARSON, COLORADO. THE UNIT WAS REORGANIZED AND REDESIGNATED ON 16 AUGUST 1987 AS COMPANY D, 4TH AVIATION BATTALION, 4TH INFANTRY DIVISION. ON 16 NOVEMBER 1993, THE UNIT WAS REORGANIZED AND REDESIGNATED AS HEADQUARTERS AND HEADQUARTERS COMPANY, 4TH BATTALION, 4TH AVIATION REGIMENT. IN FEBRUARY 1996 AT FORT CARSON, COLORADO THE BATTALION WAS INACTIVATED.

ON 8 JANUARY 2004, THE CHIEF OF STAFF, UNITED STATES ARMY, APPROVED THE ARMY TASK FORCE FOCUS GROUP'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A SECOND ATTACK/RECONNAISSANCE BATTALION TO BE ASSIGNED TO THE HEAVY DIVISIONS.

ON 9 FEBRUARY 2005, 1ST SQUADRON, 6TH UNITED STATES CAVALRY REGIMENT SUCCESSFUL COMPLETED THE LONGBOW FIELDING AND TRAINING PROGRAM AND WAS ASSIGNED TO AVIATION BRIGADE, 4TH INFANTRY DIVISION. ON 10 JUNE 2005, 1ST SQUADRON, 6TH UNITED STATES CAVALRY REGIMENT WAS DEACTIVATED. ON 10 JUNE 2005 THE UNIT WAS REDESIGNATED AND ACTIVATED AS 4TH BATTALION, 4TH AVIATION REGIMENT AND JOINS THE FIGHT AGAINST THE NATIONS' ENEMIES REMAINING A DECISIVE FORCE IN THE WAR AGAINST TERRORISM.



**Aviation Brigade, 4ID**



**4<sup>TH</sup> BATTALION (ATTACK) 4<sup>TH</sup> AVIATION REGIMENT  
FORT HOOD, TEXAS**